

## Wilderness House Literary Review 18/2

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### **Detect Light**

Strap a patch over one eye, hunch forward, put your chin on a shelf and look through a monocle into a white bowl. Click when you see a light, like a video game. The lights don't move, they flash, so why do I feel car-sick? I think that was a light. *Click*. It hasn't flashed for a while. *Click*. I'm supposed to look straight ahead but how do I see what's coming from the side?

*Where the optic nerve passes through the retina there are no photoreceptors to detect light. Among other things, the visual field test locates your blind spot.*

Last year I didn't see it coming when my daughter's husband left her. I began to worry about everything. My husband's cough meant cancer, my headache signaled an oncoming stroke. The itch in the middle of my back had to be shingles.

I saw the blackberry vines snaking up from the creek, not the poppies glowing on the terrace. I fixated on the grass growing between the patio bricks and ignored the bees bouncing on the lilacs. While the juncos slipped in and out of the ivy on the rock wall I watched the empty birdhouse hanging from the cherry tree.

Last week the eye doctor emailed to say I had so many false positive clicks in my visual field test we'd have to redo it. Fear of missing something had made me less alert, not more. I took a deep breath and stared out the window. Out of the corner of my eye I saw a rabbit on the patio turn her ear from side to side.

This morning I stepped outside just as a breeze caught the sail of the chimes. The big dipper hung over the firs and solar lights marked the curb. I crested the hill just as a line of light edged over the horizon.